

County of Santa Clara

Environmental Resources Agency
Parks and Recreation Department

298 Garden Hill Drive
Los Gatos, California 95032-7669
(408) 358-3741 FAX 358-3245
Reservations (408) 358-3751 TDD (408) 356-7146
www.parkhere.org



August 9, 2000

Ms. Nina Bicknese
Biological Sciences Environmental Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
1325 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

RE: Comments on Draft General Re-Evaluation Report/Environmental Impact Report and Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (draft report) for Proposed Modifications to the Guadalupe River Project – Downtown San Jose, California

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the subject Draft General Re-Evaluation Report/EIR and Supplemental EIS documents for the Guadalupe River Project in Downtown San Jose. Our comments, which follow, are focused on the potential impacts and/or association with parks and trails of the proposed modifications of the Guadalupe River Project within the proposed project area.

As shown in the City of San Jose's General Plan, the Guadalupe River Corridor, is also designated as a sub-regional trail route, "*S3 – Guadalupe Trail*," in our Countywide Trails Master Plan in the Parks and Recreation Chapter of the Santa Clara County General Plan. As a result, the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department is especially encouraged to see, through the hard work of the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens Committee and San Jose Redevelopment Agency, the provision of and improvements to trails within the Guadalupe River Corridor. However, we would like to see the public's concerns about the visual impacts and public safety of the proposed box culvert addressed in the DEIR and Supplemental EIS.

CSC-1

CSC-2
CSC-3

On another note, we also anticipate that, as the planning process continues for other Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) projects for the Lower Guadalupe River and Alviso Baylands area, the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement will address the cumulative impacts and mitigation measures to preserve public access on existing and future trails along the Guadalupe River Corridor in the Downtown Guadalupe Reach, Lower Guadalupe Reach, and Alviso Marina area. It is hoped that opportunities for future regional trail connections, such as those being recommended by the City of San Jose Bay Trail Master Plan, will be preserved throughout the entire Guadalupe River Corridor.

CSC-4



Board of Supervisors: Donald F. Gage, Blanca Alvarado, Peter McHugh, James T. Beall Jr., S. Joseph Simitian
County Executive: Richard Wittenberg

In particular, the Parks Department is seriously concerned about how the potentially significant impacts of the proposed flood protection alternatives for the Guadalupe River Reach in the downtown San Jose area may impose cumulative effects on the Lower Guadalupe River Flood Protection Project. We had commented on an earlier Notice of Preparation for the Draft EIR for the latter project. In regards to the increased backwater flooding that will occur in the Alviso Marina County Park area with the proposed flood protection measures of the Lower Guadalupe River Project, the Parks Department is currently coordinating the SCVWD on refining design solutions for their proposed flood protection alternatives. We had scheduled Bay Trail development and improvements in Alviso Marina County Park, as part of our 1997 Alviso Marina County Park Master Plan, in Fall 2001. Our grant awards from the San Francisco Bay Trail and Coastal Conservancy would provide enhanced amenities for Bay Trail users and work towards completing the Bay Trail loop around the park.

CSC-4

The Parks Department strongly recommends the SCVWD address the cumulative impacts of the three (3) Guadalupe River Projects currently under way. We would like to see the Alviso Marina County Park remain open and usable for the Alviso community and our park visitors. We look forward to seeing the Final EIR and Supplemental EIS.

If you would like to discuss any of our comments in greater detail, please email me at jane.mark@mail.prk.co.santa-clara.ca.us, or contact me at (408) 358-3741, extension 152.

Sincerely,

JANE MARK
Park Planner

CC: Lisa Killough, Deputy Director, Administration
Mark Frederick, Manager, Planning and Development
Khoa Vo, Associate Civil Engineer



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